

## A New Race of *Phylloscopus umbrovirens* (Rüppell) from the Juniper Forests of Northern British Somaliland

by MR. P. A. CLANCEY

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Slater, "Systema Avium Æthiopicarum", part II, 1930, p. 506, and Chapin, "Birds of the Belgian Congo", vol. III, 1953, p. 477, place the northern British Somaliland populations of the small leaf-warbler *Phylloscopus* (= *Seicercus*) *umbrovirens* (Rüppell) as referable to the race *P. u. omoensis* (Neumann), 1905: Banka, Omo River region, south-western Abyssinia, while other workers have placed them as nominate *P. umbrovirens*, which was described in 1840 from Simen, in central Abyssinia. At the request of my colleague, Mr. J. G. Williams, Ornithologist of the Coryndon Memorial Museum, Nairobi, I have recently studied a meticulously prepared series of specimens from Erigavo, northern British Somaliland, in conjunction with material of the races *P. u. umbrovirens*, *P. u. omoensis*, *P. u. mackenzianus* (Sharpe), 1892: Kikuyu, Kenya Colony, and *P. u. yemenensis* (Ogilvie-Grant), 1913: Manacha, Yemen. I find that the Erigavo birds differ markedly from the races listed on important and significant colour and dimensional characters. They are obviously not the same as either nominate *P. umbrovirens* or the more saturated southern Abyssinian race, *P. u. omoensis*, as claimed by authors, and I believe that they represent a well-defined new race which is restricted in its distribution to the juniper forests crowning the high escarpment of northern British Somaliland.

*Phylloscopus umbrovirens williamsi*, subsp. nov.

*Type*: ♀ adult. Juniper forest 10 miles north of Erigavo, northern British Somaliland. Collected by J. G. Williams. 27th February, 1954. To be deposited in the collection of the British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London.

*Diagnosis*: Differs from the Abyssinian races *P. u. umbrovirens* and *P. u. omoensis* (*P. u. erythrae* (Salvadori), of northern Abyssinia and Eritrea, I have not examined), in being darker, browner and rather more uniformly coloured above. Ventrally much paler, with little or no brown wash on the throat and upper breast. Wings with no yellow on the lesser and median coverts and with less yellow on the primary and secondary coverts, remiges and tertials. Less yellow on the rectrices, and bill longer, *i.e.*, 13–14 mm. as against 12–13 mm. in the races mentioned.

*P. u. yemenensis* of south-western Arabia is rather similar to the nominate race but differs in having the dorsal surfaces uniform—in *P. u. umbrovirens* the mantle is paler and greyer than the crown and nape—and from it the new race here described can be differentiated on characters similar to those enumerated in the comparison with *P. u. umbrovirens* and *P. u. omoensis*.

From *P. u. mackenzianus* of Kenya Colony *P. u. williamsi* differs in being darker on the upper-parts; in showing much less yellow on the wings and tail; and in having the sides of the head and body less brownish, and the under tail-coverts are not yellowish. The bill is also longer than in

*P. u. mackenzianus*.

*Range:* Known only from the juniper forest in the vicinity of Erigavo, northern British Somaliland, but almost certainly widely distributed throughout the forest capping the northern Somaliland escarpment.

*Measurements of the Type:* Wing (flattened) 55.5, culmen from base 14, tarsus 20.5, tail 44 mm.

*Material:* The *Type* and four paratypes. The *Type* to be deposited in the British Museum (Nat. Hist.); three paratypes in the Coryndon Museum collection; one paratype in the Durban Museum collection.

*Remarks:* *P. u. williamsi* differs from all its geographical congeners in the reduced amount of yellow on the wings, darker upper-parts, and paler, less brownish, ventral surfaces. The bill is also longer and there is a trend towards greater over all size, which is most marked in the average greater tail-length of the males, *i.e.*, 50–52 mm. as against 44–50 mm. in ♂♂ of the other races examined.

I am deeply indebted to Mr. Williams, who collected the specimens, for kindly allowing me to describe the new race in his honour. I am also grateful to Mr. J. D. MacDonald, Keeper of the Bird Room, British Museum (Nat. Hist.), London, and Dr. A. L. Rand, Curator of Birds, Chicago Natural History Museum, for the prompt way my requests for the loan of comparative material were met, and to Dr. James P. Chapin for looking over the series in conjunction with me.

## On *Phylloscopus trochilus* (Linn.) in Great Britain

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Clancey has shown (British Birds XLIII p. 188) that examples of *Phylloscopus trochilus* (L.) from Scotland are not to be distinguished from the grey-brown birds which occur in Scandinavia and which he attributes to *P. t. acredula* (L.).

A series of spring birds from Scotland in the Bolton Museum collection supports Clancey's statement except inasmuch that a few extreme examples resemble in colour, though not in size, the eastern race *P. t. yakutensis* Ticehurst. These birds are grey-brown dorsally, except for a tinge of green on the rump and quite without yellow below, apart from a tinge on the under-wing coverts (in one ♀ even this is missing).

Ticehurst (A Systematic Review of the Genus *Phylloscopus*, British Museum, Nat. Hist. 1938), however, shows that the name *acredula* = *eversmanni* Bonaparte is to be referred not to the brown and white birds but to the brightly coloured olivaceous form which fringes the nominotypical race on the north and east, although subsequently treating both forms as phases of *acredula*.

It is our view that the *P. trochilus* populations are best regarded as two separate, now rejunctent, forms which survived the ultimate Glacial period in segregate pockets and which spread differentially northwards during post-glacial climatic changes. This contention is supported by their different winter quarters. If we associate the re-entry of the grey-brown and white *yakutensis*-type populations with the Boreal phase, accompanying the northward spread of *Pinus sylvestris* L., and that it gave way before